

Herger Works for Sound Forest Management

Last Congress, I successfully introduced legislation designed to prevent the type of catastrophic forest and wild-land fires that ravaged Northern California this past summer. The Herger-Feinstein Quincy Library Group Forest Recovery Act institutes a locally-conceived plan of strategic thinning and fuel breaks that will make our forests more fire-resilient. It originated from a diverse coalition of environmentalists, forest-products industry representatives, labor, and local officials in Quincy, California. Dubbed the Quincy Library Group (QLG), the members set aside their historic differences to hammer out a consensus-based forest management proposal based on the best available science.

The U.S. Forest Service was assigned the responsibility of carrying out the Plan, but made several last minute changes to the Record of Decision would significantly diminish its effectiveness. These changes, based on a combination of bad science and special interest politics, will prevent treatment on perhaps half of the 2.5 million acres already designated for

fire protection. The QLG is concerned the changes will not permit implementation of the Plan as the Group and Congress intended, and has appealed the decision, hoping to get the Plan back on track.

This five-year pilot project is an historic opportunity to manage our forests for health and safety while providing economic benefits for our local communities and schools. Regrettably, the Forest Service has rejected this plan, despite the fact that the risk of widespread catastrophic fires increases each fire season. I strongly support the Quincy Library Group in its efforts to right this critically important project, and will continue to do everything I can to ensure the Plan is implemented at the pace and scale necessary to address this extreme fire risk.



Congressman Herger and Congresswoman Helen Chenoweth (R-ID) testify in the House Resources Subcommittee on Forests and Forest Health field hearing in Redding on August 30. The hearing, which was open to the public, examined several issues, including the Forest Service's selection of the QLG Alternative 2 and implementation of the QLG plan.

Herger Advocates for Increased Water Storage

As a native Northern Californian who has lived through our seemingly constant cycle of droughts and floods, I know the question is not *whether* we will have another drought or flood, but *when*. Recognizing this reality, I have always advocated for increased water storage and

flood control in California. I am continuing that fight today as major water decisions are being considered—decisions which could affect the North State for decades.

As you may know, there is a state and federal partnership known as CALFED

which has been tasked with finding a comprehensive solution to our most serious water problems. Unfortunately, many of the individuals and organizations seeking to influence CALFED's decisions have taken an extreme position against any additional water storage facilities. Imagine the impact on our state's already strained water supply if the entire populations of Arizona, Nevada, Oregon, Idaho, Wyoming, Colorado, and Utah decided to move to California.

While this scenario may sound preposterous, according to a recent forecast issued by the California Department of Water Resources (DWR), the equivalent population of these seven states will be added to our present state population by 2020. These nearly 15 million new Californians will mean our state will experience a water deficit of at least 1.6 million acre feet in an average water year. To give you some perspective, one acre foot of water meets all of the basic water needs (bathing, drinking, etc.) of a family of

Herger Works for County School Funding Revitalization

In 1908, the federal government entered into an agreement with rural forest communities in which the government was the dominant landowner. Under this compact, counties receive 25 percent of timber revenues from federal forested land within their borders. By law, these reserves finance rural public schools and local road infrastructure.

However, in recent years, the 25 percent revenues for these counties have declined dramatically due to the Clinton Administration's policy of locking up our National Forests to responsible timber management. Sadly, the victims of this policy have been our forests, which are in extremely poor health and at high risk of catastrophic fire, and our communities and schools, which suffer from lack of needed funding.

Nationally, payments to many counties have dropped to less than 10 percent of their historic levels. The impact of these losses on rural communities and schools